1: Fitzgerald H-5 (1937-1938) AE3 Sino-Tibetan
Border Peoples AE3

During the early years of life children are left to the care of the women of the household and, in poorer families, are carried about on their mothers' backs to the fields or the market place, until they are old enough to walk by themselves. As is also the case in other parts of China, where the use of cow's milk is unknown, weaning does not take place till a child is three years old or more, and the change to a rice diet often brings digestive troubles and ill-health. The Min Chia, who do use cow's milk, do not seem to know how to make use of it for feeding young children. As soon as the child is weaned it is given the same food as adults—rice, vegetables and fish or meat in small quantities—while the milk which would be more suitable in plain dishes is made into cheese. Infant mortality, already very high on account of the unchecked epidemics of measles, scarlet fever and typhoid, is largely increased by digestive disorders due to the change to unsuitable diet.

Once a child, especially a boy, has got over this difficult period it has a happy life, for the Min Chia are extremely affectionate to children, who, within reason, are allowed to do much as they like. As might be expected under these circumstances the children end by doing something which is very annoying or mischievous, and their enraged parents then chastise them On such occasions the outcry made by boy or girl might suggest that they were being beaten to death, but this is largely a conventional manifestation of grief rather than of pain, for it would be considered most unfilial and almost indecent for a child to bear punishment with fortitude; this would seem to the Min Chia not a proof of pluck, but a display of obstinacy and sulkiness. Consequently the child howls its loudest and the parent, satisfied by this evidence of contrition, is rarely very severe.

Min Chia children have quite a large variety of toys, all

Mewu

164 The Tibetans are a very strong race of men; I did not see a single asthenic type among the Mewsu-Fantzu. Their health, apart from infectious diseases, is good. The most frequent complaints of patients who came to me were of rheumatism and stomach disorders. The latter often seemed to indicate chronic catarrh of the stomach and also stomach ulcers. There is a very frequent incidence of conjunctivitis, probably often trachoma. Smallpox is very prominent among the infectious diseases, and syphilis among the chronic ones. I did not observe any cases of tuberculosis, but there is leprosy, infrequent, in spite of the fact that lepers are not segregated. All the more ravaging are the effects of syphilis which here goes hand in hand with deterioration of the skin, mucous membranes and bones.

164 853 Infant mortality is extraordinarily high. Most families have only one or two children, although women often give birth to as many as ten. The reason for this may be in the strange way babies are fed. People prefer to give their children yak milk rather than mother's milk, because they say mother's milk makes them stupid. Although yak milk is richer than cow's milk, the children get the boiled milk undiluted, /10/ often with added butter and roasted barley flour (tsamba).

Men's Dress

291 We shall touch only briefly on the dress (1) of the Mewu-Fantzu

1. Compare Rockhill 1), page 684 ff. His illustrations and descriptions give a good general idea, although they are not specifically of the Mewu-Fantzu, and despite the fact that each tribe has definite characteristics of costume, ornament and hair style.

because it is the common dress of Tibetans in general. The chief article of clothing is a large sheep fur. It has very long sleeves that extend far over the hands. They prefer to put only their left arm into the sleeve and leave the right arm and shoulder free. The fur of the nomads is usually bordered at the neck with a band of leopard skin about 10 centimeters wide. The coat has a hem at the bottom of black woolen material. Poor people omit the leopard skin trimming or replace it with a border of pulu. This is a Tibetan woolen material. It is not made by the western Tibetans themselves, but is imported from the highlands of Inner Tibet. The leopard skin trimming is obtained ready-made from Chinese traders; the grassland